

REMARKS**I. Introduction**

At the time of the Office Action dated September 26, 2006, claims 1, 4-12, and 14-16 were pending in this application. Applicant acknowledges, with appreciation, the Examiner's allowance of claims 7, 8, and 16. Applicant also acknowledges, with appreciation, the Examiner's indication that claims 4 and 14 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 1, 5, 6, 9-12, and 15 stand rejected.

In this Amendment, claims 1 and 12 have been amended to include all the limitations recited in allowable claims 4 and 14, respectively, and claims 4 and 14 have been canceled. Therefore, the present Amendment does not generate any new matter or any new issue for that matter. Accordingly, entry of the present Amendment is solicited pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.116.

II. The Rejection of Claims 1, 5, 6, 9-12, and 15

Claims 1, 5, and 9-12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Ohitsu et al.; and claims 6 and 15 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohitsu et al. in view of Okubo et al.

Applicant submits that claims 1, 5, 6, and 9-12 are patentably distinguishable over Ohitsu et al. and Okubo et al. at least because (i) independent claims 1 and 12 have been amended to include the allowable subject matter recited in claims 4 and 14, respectively, and (ii) dependent claims 5, 6, and 9-11 include all the limitations recited independent claims 1 and 12, respectively.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully solicits withdrawal of the rejection of the claims and favorable consideration thereof.


III. Conclusion

Therefore, the application is now in condition for allowance, an indication of which is respectfully solicited. If there are any outstanding issues that might be resolved by an interview or an Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is requested to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number shown below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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